



MATTERS OF OPINION



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Director

With this special fall issue of *North Dakota OUTDOORS*, we are moving into the season of seasons.

In September, October and November, the bulk of our hunting takes place. This fall should be one of our best ever. North Dakota is blessed with abundant upland game, waterfowl, turkey, pronghorn and deer. We often hear old timers talking about the "good old days." In my opinion, we will be living the good old days this fall.

I remember vividly the good old days of the late 1940s and 1950s. It was during the days of soil bank, great habitat and abundant ducks and upland game. My home town of Kulm was located in prime country when it came to ducks and pheasants. Located at the junction of LaMoure, Dickey, McIntosh and Logan counties, our sloughs were loaded with ducks. I would bolt a two-by-four, with chains hanging down, across the front of the tractor to keep game out of the sickle on the hay mower. It was a hunting heaven for a small kid growing up on the prairie.

When I think back on some of those unique and special times, I often wish I had kept a record of these events. Recently, I was visiting with a couple of my grandchildren as they shared some of their experiences from traveling overseas. Each kept a journal that will serve them forever. Years from now, they can review their journals with their grandchildren and accurately reflect in detail the experiences they had many years ago. No doubt these records will be treasured forever.

I've often thought of keeping a journal of some kind. Many of us know people who keep a diary or record events in a timely

manner. Today's computers would make this quite simple. However, having a journal along to jot down events as you sit in a duck blind or take a break atop a prairie hill would be, I think, more endearing. Years from now, long after you've retired from duck blinds and prairie hunts, the journal, a slice of your personal history, would remain.

I would like to go back and read of the times of my parents and grandparents. I truly admire those folks who had the foresight and tenacity to keep a record of past events. Even some old family Bibles have records of births, deaths and sometimes special occasions. I cherish this information and wish there was more of it.

This fall, make a special attempt to keep a journal of your autumn experiences. Webster's dictionary defines journal as: an account of day-to-day events – a record of experiences, ideas, or reflections kept regularly for private use. To keep a journal, I don't think you have to go to the extreme. A spiral notebook would work just fine, but a leather-bound journal, perhaps given as a gift to grandpa, dad, daughter or son, to record each hunting trip would be nice. It can ride in the hunting bag along with shotgun shells, thermos, camera and other paraphernalia. The scratches, stains and smells it will likely acquire over time will help tell the stories.

I am strongly thinking of starting a journal of special hunting and fishing experiences upon my retirement. I know it's a bit late, but better late than never.

I wish you a wonderful and safe fall season.